FACTORS INFLUENCING AIR FORCE MEMBERS'

TOLERANCE OF FRATERNIZATION

THESIS

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Abstract

Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*, provides the current policy on acceptable and unacceptable social interactions between Air Force members. The intent of distinguishing relationships as professional or unprofessional is to preserve proper respect for authority and maintain focus on the mission through professional relationships while avoiding the negative effects of unprofessional relationships. Fraternization is one unacceptable type, which specifically governs relationships between officers and enlisted members.

There have long been differences between official policy and actual practice in the area of fraternization. These differences likely influence the acceptance of existing policy, and the amount of tolerance toward behaviors that Air Force policy would consider unprofessional. High tolerance of fraternization acts among Air Force members will likely lead to more fraternization.

Thus, if the Air Force does not want fraternization to occur among its members it needs to take action to reduce members' tolerance of those acts constituting fraternization. The results of this research effort suggest that members' tolerance is determined by three things: fraternization, consequences, and the perception of need for the policy. The general implication of the study is that the Air Force should enforce the training requirement of AFI 36-2909 and develop ways to ensure proper implementation of the Air Force fraternization policy across the Air Force. It seems this is the best way to decrease members' tolerance of fraternization.

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I. Introduction

Military life is governed by regulations that serve to set standards, promote professionalism, and maintain good order and discipline among its members. Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*, is one such regulation. This regulation governs relationships between Air Force members. It defines unprofessional relationships as a "personal relationship, which detracts from the authority of superiors or results in, or reasonably creates the appearance of favoritism, misuse of office or position, or the abandonment of organizational goals for personal interest." Fraternization is one type of unprofessional relationship that is governed by AFI 36-2909, which defines fraternization as

A personal relationship between an officer and an enlisted member which violates the customary bounds of acceptable behavior in the Air Force and prejudices good order and discipline, discredits the armed services, or operates to the personal disgrace or dishonor of the officer involved. The custom recognizes that officers will not form personal relationships with enlisted members on terms of military equality, whether on or off-duty (AFI 36-2909, 1999).

In February 1999 then Secretary of Defense William Cohen sent out a memo that required the services to adopt clear, uniform, and consistent policies on fraternization. "The order followed a series of embarrassing military sex scandals and well-publicized fraternization cases. Among them were the rape of recruits by drill sergeants at Aberdean

Proving Ground, charges of sexual harassment against Sergeant Major of the Army Gene McKinney, the Lieutenant Kelly Flynn fraternization case and the scuttled nomination of Air Force General Joseph Ralston to become chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff" (Pulley, 1999). The order intended to make the policy clearer to military members and to be consistent so that all military members would be meeting the same standards and following the same rules. Although there is no Department of Defense policy regarding fraternization, all military members need to be held to similar standards especially in areas of a sensitive nature. This is even more important in our growing joint environment.

The current policy governing fraternization is strong, however, it is not easily understood. This was pointed out by de Leon, defense undersecretary for personnel and readiness, in the Air Force Times when it was noted that "Gen. Ronald R. Fogleman, the former Air Force chief of staff, might have known exactly what fraternization rules meant but that did not mean airmen in the field understood them" (Wilson, 1997). In addition, that a policy exists does not mean that it is being implemented in organizations.

Many Air Force regulations specify consequences for specific violations, however, that is not the case with the regulation governing fraternization. In cases of fraternization punishments are left to the commander's discretion. There is no doubt that consequences for violations are an important part of the fraternization policy. The problem is the confusion surrounding fraternization that results from the discretion involved in the process. Air Force members move every three to four years and therefore face what amounts to a new policy because of the commander's discretion. Additionally the policy itself has undergone many changes over the last several years adding more

confusion. As a result, it is questionable whether or not those who are responsible for training members actually know and understand the most recent version of the policy. Considering all the factors affecting the interpretation of fraternization there is a real possibility that Air Force members are receiving contradictory and/or confusing guidance on the subject.

Different degrees of implementation of the fraternization policy lead to different attitudes, which may remain with individuals as they progress through their career and inevitably move to new units. The problems caused by the discretionary factor involved in fraternization are not limited to the confusion discussed above. What an individual learns at one unit can be carried with them to the next and an attitude formed based on the typical beliefs of the first unit can cause a violation at the next unit. Attitudes are not easily changed, especially if they have been reinforced by members who are in positions of authority. As interpretations vary so too will attitudes.

Attitudes may also vary based on circumstance. Whether or not the members involved are in the same chain of command is on such item. Members are likely to be more tolerant of fraternization when it occurs outside the chain of command because it is more difficult to perceive the negative consequences that may result. This is largely due to the lack of a supervisory role between those involved.

As discussed previously attitudes formed at one unit can be carried by the member to their next unit. Thurston and Luther (1999) found that fraternization was more prevalent at isolated locations. Thus, members who have served in these units are likely to maintain an attitude formed during their remote assignment.

Research Problem

This study is an investigation into the attitudes held by Air Force members on the subject of fraternization. Specifically, this thesis addresses the following research questions:

What factors affect the tolerance level of Air Force members in the area of fraternization?

Does tolerance level differ based on whether the members involved are in the same chain of command or not?

Do remote assignments play a role in determining tolerance levels?

Scope

This study is limited to Air Force members and the Air Force policy on fraternization as of the 1999 change. Data for the study was collected through the use of a survey given to a random sample of Air Force members in the ranks of O-1 (Second Lieutenant) to O-5 (Lieutenant Colonel) and E-2 (Airman) to E-8 (Senior Master Sergeant). The survey asked the respondents to answer questions regarding their tolerance of fraternization, implementation of the fraternization policy within their unit, negative effects of fraternization on their unit, the amount of fraternization in their unit, and the training they received. Respondents were asked demographic questions including gender, marital status, numbers of years on active duty, and whether they had served on a remote assignment.

Application of Results

Fraternization has been a concern of the United States military since its inception and continues to be one today. Fraternization is one type of unprofessional relationship recognized by AFI 36-2909 and is punishable by court martial, although there are less severe punishments. Considering the changes that have been made to the policy that have already been discussed and its sensitive nature, fraternization is one policy that needs to be taken seriously. Although it should perhaps be straightforward, it is not. It is anticipated that the results of this thesis will provide the Air Force and specifically the Judge Advocate General office with information on what factors influence members' tolerance. Knowing this may help the Air Force focus its attention on those factors that can decrease tolerance, which can also decrease the occurrence of fraternization.

Summary

The Air Force must recognize that due to the reliance on discretion in enforcing the policy the interpretation of what is and is not considered professional behavior is broad and varies across the Air Force. Different units deal with the issue differently and whether intentional or not provide the basis for different attitudes concerning the concept of fraternization. This thesis will investigate tolerance of Air Force members concerning fraternization and attempt to determine what factors contribute to those attitudes.

Sequence of Presentation

Chapter II of this thesis provides a review of the relevant literature concerning fraternization and the psychology of relationships. Chapter III focuses on the

methodology used to conduct the research for this study. The data collected and the results of this study are presented in Chapter IV. Finally, Chapter V will interpret the data with respect to the hypotheses that were investigated with this study. The findings will be presented with the conclusions, limitations, and recommendations for future research in the area of fraternization.

II. Literature Review

Introduction

Fraternization has been a topic of concern for the military for a number of years now. In recent years it has received much attention from the media, especially during the infamous Kelly Flynn case. The subject of fraternization is a sensitive one and as such there is much disagreement about the policy's purpose and need. This chapter explains the nature of fraternization, and the various factors that lead to the development of different levels of tolerance towards acts of fraternization.

Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*, provides the current policy on acceptable and unacceptable social interactions between Air Force members. This instruction states that interpersonal relationships that are in line with Air Force core values (integrity, service before self, and excellence in all we do) are professional. Relationships are unprofessional when they "erode good order, discipline, respect for authority, unit cohesion and, ultimately, mission accomplishment" (AFI 36-2909). The intent of distinguishing relationships as professional or unprofessional is to preserve proper respect for authority and maintain focus on the mission through professional relationships while avoiding the negative effects of unprofessional relationships. Unprofessional relationships include relationships that detract from authority or result in favoritism. Since the negative effects that can occur because of these relationships can affect not only the members of a unit, but the unit as a whole, Air Force members are expected to avoid them.

At one time this policy applied only to members in the same chain of command, but has since been expanded to include relationships between any members. This is due

to the belief that senior members exercise either authority or influence over the careers of all junior members they encounter. As a result a consistent potential for an abuse of power exists. This is one of the things the policy sets out to avoid. Additionally, the concern exists that the standing of officers may be lessened as a result of such relationships. If this occurs then junior members may doubt the basis of decisions made and orders given by officers. The current fraternization policy prohibits members from becoming personally involved with Air Force civilian employees or civilian contractors when the relationship could have a negative impact on the unit or its members.

In May 1999, AFI 36-2909 was revised following the Secretary of Defense's memorandum directing the services to adopt uniform, clear and readily understandable policies regarding unprofessional relationships. Changes in the Air Force policy that took effect in the 1999 revision included specific prohibitions for the recruiting and training environments, emphasis on the use of a stepped down approach to enforcement, and increased attention to the prevention of these relationships. Civilian contractors working with the Air Force were also added as those people that members are not to partake in unprofessional relationships.

There have long been differences between official policy and actual practice on professional and unprofessional relationships. Some of the differences are due to aspects of the situation. Other differences between policy and practice may be due to the socialization and indoctrination that Air Force members receive concerning professional and unprofessional relationships. These differences likely influence the acceptance of existing policy, and the amount of tolerance toward behaviors that Air Force policy would consider unprofessional. However, these differences are not the only things that

influence members' tolerance.   Tolerance is also affected by what people have experienced and/or witnessed.

Relationship Development

Fraternization is a specific type of unprofessional relationship that occurs between officers and enlisted members.   These relationships develop through interpersonal attraction, which is defined as the degree to which we like other individuals (Baron and Byrne, 1994).   There are certain factors inherent in the development of interpersonal attraction that exist in the work environment.   The first of these is propinquity, or the close physical proximity of people.   Research in social psychology indicates that people are likely to become acquainted if they are in close physical proximity of each other. This occurs when two people are working in the same office or adjoining cubicles.

Along the same lines as physical proximity is the idea of function proximity, which refers to people working on the same project or team.   Working with the same people on a regular basis provides an atmosphere in which members can become acquainted at a more personal level.   The result is a new level of closeness.   This closeness does not have to be an every day, all day occurrence; it can be occasional or incidental and have the same effect (Loftus, 1995).

Close working conditions and functional similarity encourage shared confidences. When people get news, be it good or bad, they are more likely to share it with people that work with them or at least near them.   Additionally, it has been reported that repeated contact with the same person leads to greater positive evaluations. More contact between people leads to familiarity, which in turn leads to trust.   These positive evaluations can

lead to more intimate relationships between people (Loftus, 1995). People who work together are frequently in contact with each other. In some cases in the military, this contact can last for extensive periods of time. Research also shows that these relationships occur more frequently when employees must spend long hours together or are required to work under extreme conditions (Loftus, 1995), as is the case with a number of Air Force jobs.

Another factor that leads to interpersonal attraction is having similar attitudes toward topics that are discussed. People who have similar attitudes are more likely to become friends. Military members are likely to become friends because those that join the military often have similar reasons for doing so and have similar attitudes about topics that arise. Air Force members know they have several things in common with the people they work with by the very nature of the job. Air Force members who work together share the same career field, are required to wear the same uniforms, often have the same interests, and share similar values. These similarities in attitudes pave the wave for friendship development among those members who share them.

These things lead to the development of interpersonal relationships. Thus, if officers and enlisted members are working together then these relationships are bound to develop between them regardless of differences in rank.

Although interpersonal attraction leads to the development of relationships, there is a natural, unconscious self-restraint mechanism that individuals possess. Cognitive disregard which helps individuals screen those who are deemed unacceptable to have a relationship with. This status of being unacceptable is usually based on some outward appearance characteristic such as weight, age, or attire. An example of this is when a

person is deemed unacceptable to befriend based on the car they drive. The conclusion that the individual is unacceptable occurs through the use of cognitive disregard at an unconscious level. In essence, cognitive disregard is a socially accepted form of prejudice that people use to keep unwanted individuals from joining their social unit. Although cognitive disregard is a natural process it is not as applicable in the military environment because the characteristics usually used as the basis are limited. Military members are required to meet certain physical standards and wear the same attire, with minimal allowable deviations. Additionally, military members are already a part of the same organization (the Air Force) and to some extent have already been accepted into aspects of the social unit of that organization. Rank is the Air Force's determining characteristic for cognitive disregard; however, rank is not a natural characteristic and does not appear outside of the workplace. Thus, outside the workplace outward appearances are similar among all employees, which limits the application of cognitive disregard.

Since cognitive disregard is dampened in the military environment the Air Force needs measures to offset its absence. The Air Force has provided a fraternization policy to its members so that there is a built in notion of unacceptability for officers and enlisted members to develop relationships. However, this policy is useless without proper implementation. Without proper implementation the policy cannot provide its intended barrier to inappropriate relationships. Additionally, the Air Force needs to provide training on this policy. Training is the best means of explaining the policy such that the unacceptability of relationships between officers and enlisted members becomes known to Air Force members. The Air Force has acknowledged the need for training in the

regulation by requiring commanders to ensure their members receive an annual briefing in the area of professional and unprofessional relationships, including fraternization. AFI 36-2909 specifically calls for this annual training, however, there is no method in place for ensuring that this training is actually occurring across the Air Force. Which leads to the question of whether or not commanders are following the regulation and whether or not members are receiving this training.

Barriers to Policy Definition and Implementation

Problems exist such that it is difficult for Air Force members to define and implement the fraternization policy. The first of these is the different types of relationships that occur. Interpersonal attraction leads to several types of relationships. Reisman (1981) states that friendships can be categorized as either associative friendships, reciprocal friendships, or receptive friendships. Associative friendships are those that are the result of circumstance; there is no loyalty or sense of commitment to sustain the friendships beyond the circumstances that brought it about. These relationships are those that the Air Force supports between coworkers including officers and enlisted members. Base sports teams and organized unit morale activities are the types of activities that members in these relationships would partake in together. Thus, these relationships can help promote unit morale and mission accomplishment. Further, associative friendships have negligible impact on good order, discipline and unit morale.

Reciprocal friendships are close, ideal, and true. They are based on loyalty and commitment between people who consider themselves equals. Relationships of this nature are deemed inappropriate for officers and enlisted members by the Air Force for

two reasons. The first is that this type of friendship is based on the idea of equality between the two; however, in the Air Force when an officer gives an order it is not the place of enlisted members to argue. Thus, rank puts the two on uneven ground. There is also the issue of the bond that forms between people involved in this type of friendship. Relationships of this sort may make it difficult for an officer to send befriended enlisted members to a poor location, on an extended TDY, or into a dangerous situation. This is especially true in combat situations, which can arise at any time.

Receptive friendships are relationships where one member is the giver and one is the taker; there is a recognized difference in the status between the two (Dickens, 1981). Receptive relationships are those relationships that are likely to result in favoritism when they occur between officers and enlisted members, and are therefore prohibited by the regulation. In the Air Force these relationships often result in the enlisted members receiving an unfair advantage over fellow workers. This causes other members in the unit to feel slighted and their work may suffer as a result. These relationships can be detrimental to the unit and its mission.

Each of these three types of friendships has the potential to develop while officers and enlisted members are working together. Reisman also states that there are two reasons that friendships develop. The first is utility where people look for friends who will be useful to them, people who have something that could be drawn upon for their own benefit. The second reason is pleasure, to spend time doing extracurricular activities with (Reisman, 1981). A third reason for friendships suggested by Aristotle is virtue. These friendships are based on admirable qualities and virtuous characteristics that the other person has. Many times these reasons are unconscious and therefore the parties

involved are not aware of their intentions. As such, any friendship that develops can be done so for any of these reasons.

A second problem with defining and implementing policy is caused by the environment. People who join the military are often assigned far from home, which can lead to feelings of loneliness and alienation. As a result, the individual experiences a greater need for friends. Along with this need there is a considerable interest and enthusiasm to make new friends to go with the new surroundings and circumstances (Bischof, 1969). Additionally, Packard's 1972 findings, show evidence that the process of friendship formation is accelerated among people who find themselves in transition, since they share similar uncertainties, disruptions, and pressures to make friends quickly (Packard, 1972). This leads to becoming friends with those individuals they have already met and are acquainted with which usually includes those people with whom they work. While this does not always cause a problem, there are instances where, especially in small organizations, it can

Fraternization Model

This research effort focuses on attitudes and perceptions of fraternization. The path diagram in Figure 1 shows the relationships among various aspects of fraternization. Six constructs were used in the development of the fraternization model and each of those items will be discussed in the following section of this chapter. They are norms, training, need, fraternizing, consequences, and tolerance. Norms refers to the implementation of the Air Force fraternization policy in members' current organizations. Training includes the ways in which training was performed (organizational briefing, newspaper article,

etc.). Training includes the formal presentation of the fraternization policy including general guidelines and prohibited activities. Need represents members perceptions of the need for the fraternization policy. Fraternizing is in reference to the amount of fraternization occurring in each member's unit. Consequences are the negative effects that occur in the work environment on the unit and its members as a result of fraternization acts. Consequences as discussed here do not include disciplinary action, rather, they refer to undesirable outcomes that can affect the unit as a whole as well as unit members individually. Finally, tolerance is the degree to which members are accepting of actions constituting fraternization.
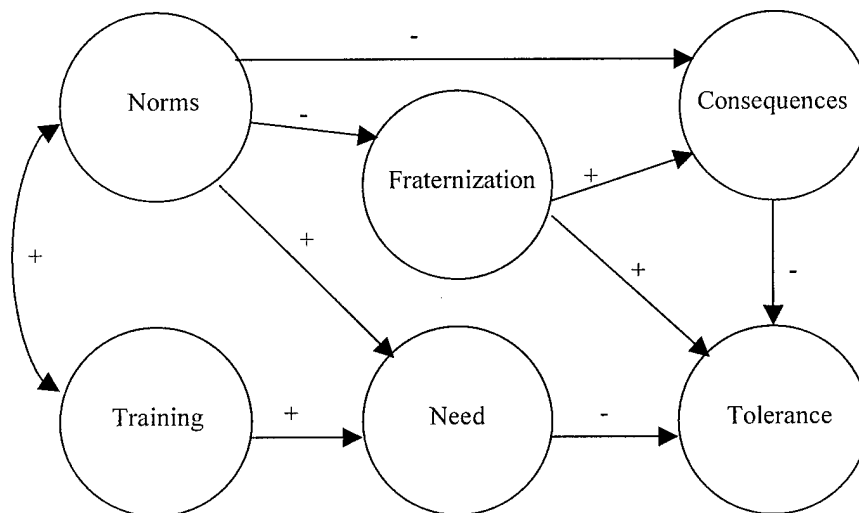

Figure 1 Fraternization Model

As Figure 1 suggests, organizations with a strong policy against fraternization that also provide formal training should, in general, have members who perceive a greater need for the fraternization policy. Members' perceptions of the need for the fraternization policy contribute to their tolerance of fraternization acts. When norms and

training influence members' perceptions of the need for the fraternization policy such that members believe a need exists that perception lowers their tolerance levels.

Norms also influence the number of negative consequences experienced by the organization and its members. Strong norms lead to decreased consequences and vice versa. In a similar manner a strong fraternization policy will discourage fraternization among unit members and in doing so will have the effect of decreasing the number of fraternization acts in the unit. As fraternization decreases in a unit that unit experiences fewer negative consequences.

The effect of decreased consequences is higher tolerance of fraternization acts. It is also possible for an increase in fraternization acts to directly cause an increase in tolerance levels for such acts. This is largely due to desensitization among some members.

Norms

Since the way in which fraternization cases are handled is largely left up to the commander's discretion it is imperative to determine the ways in which these cases are being dealt with. As a result of this discretion there is a lack of consistency surrounding the topic, and due to the way in which the instruction is written there are no standards for discipline. Appropriate forms of discipline range from something as nonthreatening as counseling to something as severe as adverse comments on a performance report. In aggravated cases the ranking member may face a court martial. Based on this information, it is easy to see that two people in two different units can partake in the same activity and receive two different punishments, which have significantly different career

implications. For example, if two officers are both found to have been participating in a weekly poker game with enlisted members one could receive formal counseling while the other receives an Article 15. In this case it is fairly clear that the counseling session will not follow the individual to his or her next assignment where as the Article 15 will.

The treatment of fraternization in a particular unit can affect the members of that unit beyond punishments given out for violations, especially among younger members. Attitudes and interpretations are formed based on personal views, the environment, and how others in the environment view things. Attitudes developed by individuals are often carried with them for many years, until a new environment forces a new attitude or interpretation. Thus, attitudes concerning fraternization are often formed at an Air Force member's first assignment and are then carried with them to future assignments.

One example demonstrated by Thurston and Luther (1999) in the area of fraternization is the difference in leadership reaction between isolated and non-isolated bases. They found a higher proportion of chain of command fraternization incidents at remote locations when compared to CONUS stations, but a lower proportion of judicial punishment (dismissal). The analysis was conducted on descriptions of actual cases of fraternization at Air Force bases collected through the Freedom of Information Act. The combined results indicate that relative isolation increases the likelihood of the most detrimental form of fraternization while at the same time reduces the severity of consequences. Statistical analysis also showed that reported fraternization incidents were more likely to be of a sexual nature and involve people of different genders regardless of unit isolation. This can certainly cause problems if members assigned to an isolated base are then assigned to a non-isolated base, but continue to view fraternization from the

perspective of the isolated base. The relative isolation of remote bases may effectively limit the options people have. Isolated locations often have less manning than CONUS locations and thus there are fewer options as far as who to socialize with. Additionally, some remote locations do not have a local population that can provide other options or it has been advised not to become to involved with the local populations. The existence of this limitation may cause commanders to implement the Air Force fraternization policy less stringently. It can be argued that Air Force members located at isolated bases need more training on policies like that of fraternization because of the extreme circumstances that they must live with while at the isolated location. Of course, leniency in cases of fraternization is not limited to isolated bases. At the same time there are likely several bases where fraternization is handled quietly as the regulation suggests, so that people do not necessarily know what happens if fraternization occurs.

Training

According to the current regulation on professional and unprofessional relationships commanders and supervisors are responsible for addressing fraternization within their command annually (Pulley, 1999). More specifically commanders are required to ensure all their personnel are briefed on the policy annually. This is one way to ensure increased training on the issue of fraternization and at the same time forces commanders and supervisors to become more aware of the fraternization policy. Thus, the training that members receive in basic training, commissioning programs, or professional military education is not relied on to last for an entire career.

Ensuring members receive the required annual training aids in ensuring commanders know the policy. Formal training provides members with accurate knowledge in the area of fraternization and provides commanders with the information required to properly implement the policy. Implementation is the practical application of the fraternization policy and provides members with first hand knowledge of fraternization. Thus, formal training of commanders is the basis for proper implementation in their units.

Air Force policy toward unprofessional relationships changed in both 1996 and again in 1999. The most recent change in 1999 included changes with regard to specifically prohibited acts, and relationships between military members and civilian contractors. Although each change is minor, the changes can affect the interpretation of what is or is not acceptable behavior for an officer and enlisted person to partake in together. That being said, new training for revised regulations is obviously necessary for each change that goes into effect. One question this research tries to investigate is whether Air Force members are being properly informed of regulations' changes that they are then expected to live by. If this is not true then the possibility exists for Air Force members to be punished for violating a regulation that they were not aware had changed. Although ignorance of the law is not an excuse to break that law, it is in the Air Force's best interest to ensure its members are informed of such changes, especially when a violation can result in a criminal offense, i.e. court martial. Apparently the Air Force has recognized this fact in that AFI 36-2909 specifically addresses the issue of annual training.

The training required by AFI 36-2909 covers all professional and unprofessional relationships, not just fraternization. The ability of the commanders to ensure that their people know the policy rests on them knowing, following, and understanding the policy. The case of Lt. Col. Shelley S. Rogers is one example that demonstrates that this is not always the case.

In this case, Lt. Col. Rogers was an F-15E fighter-bomber squadron commander in Aviano, Italy who participated in an intimate friendship with his intelligence officer, Lt. Julie Clemm. In the course of this relationship the commander was seen with his arm around her waist at a squadron function, which included a number of enlisted members. According to officers in the squadron the relationship resulted in a lack of focus on many of the aircrew and generated a lack of trust in him (Ricks, 2000). Although this was not a fraternization case, it was an unprofessional relationship according to AFI 36-2909. Lt. Col. Rogers was relieved of duty, escorted to the squadron's home base where he was "court –martialed for developing 'an unprofessional relationship of inappropriate familiarity,'" and convicted of conduct unbecoming an officer (Ricks, 2000).

In his defense Lt. Col. Rogers "claimed that there was no regulation prohibiting relationships between officers," and that "no specific acts had been identified that constituted an unprofessional relationship" (Ricks, 2000). The court responded that "any officer would be on notice that this type of behavior was punishable" (Ricks, 2000). The occurrence of the relationship demonstrated that the commander opted not to follow the policy and his defense, that no regulation covered his relationship demonstrated his lack of knowledge on the subject. With behaviors of this nature occurring in the field, how are junior members suppose to know the policy and if they do know it, what is the

incentive to follow it? In this particular case is seems the commander was not enforcing the fraternization policy through strong norms. Additionally, it is not reasonable to assume that this commander was fulfilling his requirement to train his men and women. Thus, this organization is not likely to have a strong fraternization policy and therefore represents the negative side of the fraternization model.

Norms and training are two ways of influencing members through providing knowledge on the subject of fraternization. These two methods work together in an attempt to get members to both know and understand not only what fraternization is but also why the policy exists. As these two items are attempting to do the same thing in different ways they are positively correlated, as demonstrated by the curved line between norms and training in Figure 1.

Hypothesis 1: Implementation of the fraternization policy and formal training on the policy are positively correlated.

Referring to Figure 1, the path from training to need suggests that formal presentation of the policy and its contents influences members' perceptions of a need for the policy. Informing members of the potential dangers and consequences associated with unprofessional behaviors will help them understand why the policy exists. Additionally, training includes informing members of specific actions that are prohibited by AFI 36-2909. Members are also informed of potential punishments that may be issued in fraternization cases. This knowledge including the Air Force's justification for the policy will lead members to a greater understanding of the need for the policy.

Proper implementation of the Air Force fraternization policy in organizations will also lead to members possessing a stronger perception of the need for the fraternization

policy (as demonstrated by the path from norms to need in Figure 1) because they will see that the information provided in the formal presentation is being followed. This reinforces what training sets out to do. As commanders demonstrate the importance of following the policy, members are influenced to follow the policy. The combination of these two factors leads members to perceive a need for the Air Force fraternization policy. They begin to understand the importance of avoiding those consequences that can stem from the inappropriate acts of fraternization within a unit.

> *Hypothesis 2: Members in organizations with strong norms against fraternization policies perceive a greater need for the fraternization policy.*

> *Hypothesis 3: Members who receive more training will perceive a greater need for the fraternization policy.*

Need

It is human nature for people to want to befriend individuals who are like themselves. This is true for people at every stage of life. Friendships are a normal part of life for most people. Human nature dictates that friendships are formed with those people whom an individual has much in common with and/or who can positively affect the individual's life. This development of friendships happens in a number of ways and can occur in almost any situation. As such, friendships abound without regard to age, rank, position, gender, etc. Thus, the Air Force needs a policy to counteract the effects of human nature. Since the officer/enlisted division is one imposed solely by the military a formal policy is required if the Air Force is going to insist relationships not cross this unnatural line. The Air Force supports the development of associative friendships, but

discourages reciprocal and receptive friendships. As such, the formal policy must be specific enough to accommodate the development of associative friendships that help unit morale without suggesting that other friendships are also acceptable. Without a policy governing fraternization human nature will prove victorious in the development of friendships among Air Force members.

Simply having this policy is not enough. In order for the fraternization policy to work members who must live by that policy must perceive the need for the policy. It is not enough for governing officials to declare a policy, members must appreciate what the policy provides, in this case a strong division between the personal lives of officers (leaders) and enlisted members (the troops).

The perception of this need by members has the effect of lowering the tolerance levels towards fraternization among Air Force members, as suggested by the path from need to tolerance in Figure 1. As members perceive the need for the fraternization policy due to becoming aware of its purpose then they begin to realize the negative effects that can result from fraternization. Thus, as the perception of need goes up tolerance levels will go down.

Hypothesis 4: Members who perceive a greater need for the fraternization policy will have lower tolerance levels.

As the path from norms to fraternization in Figure 1 suggests, the way in which an organization treats fraternization is a determining factor in the number of fraternization acts that take place in that unit. When the leadership in an organization actively and openly discourages fraternization then the amount of fraternization decreases in that unit. This is accomplished through implementing the Air Force fraternization policy as it is

written. In doing so an organization will punish those members who do participate in fraternization and will do so quickly. Additionally, members will be made aware of where the line is between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. Being clear and quick when reacting to fraternization and emphasizing the limits imposed by the policy will result in a reduction of fraternization acts among the organization's members.

Hypothesis 5: The stricter an organization's fraternization policy is, the fewer fraternization acts occur.

The way in which an organization implements the Air Force fraternization policy has a direct impact on the amount of negative consequences experienced by that organization. This relationship can be seen in the path from norms to consequences in Figure 1. An organization with a strong fraternization policy is more likely to put a stop to fraternization when cases of it occur. This will be accomplished with appropriate punishments for those members involved. Since acts of fraternization are punished immediately, other members who know of the fraternization will also know of the punishments that will reinforce the policy against fraternization. An organization implementing a strong policy against fraternization experiences fewer negative consequences than one that does not implement a strong policy. The strong policy results in fewer negative consequences for the unit.

Hypothesis 6: The stricter an organization's fraternization policy is the fewer consequences it will experience.

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Fraternization

Fraternization includes relationships between enlisted members and officers. Fraternization is reserved for those relationships between officers and enlisted members that cross the bounds of professional behavior. In addition to those acts specifically prohibited by AFI 36-2909 acts between officers and enlisted members that have caused or have the potential to cause problems and/or disruptions for the organization are inappropriate whether they have been officially labeled as fraternization or not. Relationships that are likely to cause or have been known to cause these reactions in the past are inappropriate and are not acceptable for members to enter into. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the development of these relationships is human nature and as such members must make a concerted effort not to partake in them.

Air Force members' social needs are not the only thing that suggests fraternization to some degree is perhaps necessary. Mission needs of the unit and therefore the Air Force can also require some fraternization. Like in any business environment some of the work that must be accomplished by Air Force members relies not on what you know, but who you know. This need of information is not subject to the officer/enlisted division, but is based on who has the ability to provide the expertise on the subject at hand. Along the same lines there is the fact that work is not always accomplished in the office, but can also be taken care of over lunch, at the gym, or elsewhere, which may violate the fraternization policy.

Inappropriate acts between officers and enlisted members create an environment where other members can be negatively affected. The occurrence of these acts can result in one member receiving preferred treatment or can disrupt the work of a member

involved such that someone else has to step in. These behaviors can affect many members, not just those who are participating in fraternization. As such, as fraternization acts continue members not involved may begin to feel resentful and their work may suffer. These results are a direct result of allowing fraternization acts to continue. The longer these acts continue without punishment the more acts that will take place because they will be viewed as more acceptable. Thus, as the path from fraternization to consequences in Figure 1 suggests, an increase in fraternization in an organization results in an increase in the consequences experienced.

Hypothesis 7: As fraternization increases in a unit the level of consequences will increase.

When inappropriate behaviors are allowed to continue then the definition of an inappropriate act can begin to change. When inappropriate acts occur without punishment those acts that occur repeatedly become more acceptable and over time will be considered appropriate by unit members. Essentially, members become desensitized because these acts become a part of the work environment and as such no longer need to be avoided. As this occurs over time the tolerance levels of members increases such that things once considered inappropriate are now acceptable. Thus, as fraternization increases so do members tolerance levels (as suggested by the path from fraternization to tolerance in Figure 1).

Hypothesis 8: As fraternization increases in a unit, members' tolerance levels increase.

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Consequences

Consequences are those things that occur as the result of fraternization acts that have a negative impact on the organization or its members. One specifically addressed concern is the possibility of one member involved in fraternization giving special treatment to the other member involved. One of the biggest concerns in this area is the potential for one member to bestow favoritism upon the other member. This can be in the form of better work assignments, desired Temporary Duties Yonder, and fewer extra duties among others. Also included in negative consequences and most applicable to chain of command fraternization are those that relate to the loss of respect for the officer involved. At the same time any recognition of the enlisted members involved, such as awards received, would not be viewed as deserved by the other members of the organization. This is due to the fact that other members begin to feel resentful toward the individuals involved.

Negative impacts can also affect the way work is done in the unit. The most discussed of these is low unit morale. Unit morale suffers along with the work that needs to be accomplished. This can continue and the negative affects can be so far reaching as to include the mission not being accomplished. Members participating in fraternization may also cause a direct negative effect on the organization by concentrating on personal concerns instead of their work. However, it has been found that these relationships can increase the morale, performance, and productivity of the members involved in the relationship (Loftus, 1995), although these same factors can decrease in workers not involved. In the case of romantic relationships

the unit may suffer as a result of the breakup when the two people can no longer work together.

A unit experiencing negative consequences such as low unit morale or favoritism among some members is one in which members not participating in fraternization are suffering because others are involved. People do not like to suffer because of others actions. When people are subjected to negative affects that were not brought on by them they become resentful and want to avoid the source. In this case, the source of the suffering is the fraternization occurring. As suggested in Figure 1 (the path from consequences to tolerance), the more consequences that a unit and its members experience the more members' tolerance levels decrease.

Hypothesis 9: As consequences in a unit increase members' tolerance levels will decrease.

Tolerance

Although fraternization acts are inappropriate according to the Air Force, members do not necessarily agree. Tolerance is the degree to which members are accepting of fraternization acts that take place in their unit. Members' tolerance is affected by a number of things that occur within their units. Members become more or less tolerant of fraternization based on what occurs in units they are assigned to. These factors lead to members having tolerance levels for fraternization that are not based on the policy, but on their environment.

Demographic Influences on Tolerance

Tolerance is one measure of acceptance and the question here is whether or not Air Force members are tolerant of fraternization when it occurs in the unit that they are assigned to. One factor that often contributes to the tolerance level of individuals is whether or not the members involved in the fraternization are in the same chain of command or not. This is considered a significant difference because when the individuals are in the same chain of command there is a greater opportunity for one of the individuals (the ranking person) to give the other individual favorable treatment in the workplace. When two people in the Air Force participate in fraternization they are either in the same chain of command or they are not. Although fraternization applies to the same type of relationships without regard to chain of command, there are different implications involved. Officers and enlisted members in the same chain of command generally have superior/subordinate relationships, that is, the officer has the ability to influence the career of the enlisted member. On the other hand, when the officer and enlisted member are not in the same chain of command the officer does not have authority over the career of the enlisted member. Researchers have found that supervisor/subordinate relationships often cause problems within the work environment including ill will from coworkers. Thus, members of the Air Force may have significantly different views on what constitutes an inappropriate action when it occurs in the chain of command and when it does not.

Hypothesis 10: Members will be more tolerant of fraternization when the members involved are not in the same chain of command.

Thurston and Luther (1999) found that the occurrence of fraternization was more prevalent at isolated locations. This being the case, it is questionable that people who have been assigned to those bases and who thus have been acquainted with a more tolerant environment to fraternization will fall in line with the stricter environment found at CONUS locations. The rules, regulations, and instructions of the Air Force apply to remote locations just as they do non-remote locations. This is true for human nature as well. Therefore the discussions of attraction, friendship, and commitment apply to those assigned at remote locations in the same way as those assigned to non-remote locations. The isolation involved in being stationed at one of these locations will only strengthen the argument in favor of friendships, attractions, and commitments. As discussed earlier, isolation and loneliness often cause people to develop friendships faster. Commitment levels are also affected concerning the people and work involved.

Hypothesis 11: Members who have been assigned to a remote location will be more tolerant of fraternization.

Summary

This chapter has provided some background information on the development of friendships and presented the fraternization model for this research effort. Tolerance of fraternization is believed to be caused by three factors, the amount of fraternization that has occurred, the consequences that have been experienced, and perception of the need for the policy. It is expected that each of these factors is caused by the implementation of the policy, formal training on the policy or both. Additionally, some interaction of these

factors is expected. The following chapter will present the methodology, analysis of data, and results that were found in the study.

III. Methodology

Introduction

As stated previously this research effort involves the attitudes and degree of policy awareness among Air Force members. This chapter explains the data collection process, including a description of the sample and tools used. The analytical method used will be explained including the rationale behind its use.

Sample

Data for this research project was collected using a survey. This survey addressed the attitudes and perceptions toward fraternization. It was sent by mail to 800 randomly selected Air Force members in the ranks of E-2 (Airman) to E-8 (SMSGT) and O-1 (2Lt) to O-5 (Lt Col). The demographics of the samples are listed in Table 1. The sample did not include E-1 (Airman Basic) because these individuals are normally still in training. Air Force members in senior ranks (Col, General, and CMSGT) were not included because it was believed that they no longer work in a typical Air Force environment and would likely skew the results from the general Air Force population. Rank was a determining factor in the selection of the sample because in general it reflects the respondent's age and number of years in service. Rank is also a determining factor for position in the Air Force, which may affect the responses given to some of the questions.

Table 1
Sample Demographics

Gender:	Male	198	Rank:		O-5	28
	Female	47			O-4	26
Marital Status:	Married	169			O-3	32
	Single	70			O-2	25
Commissioning Source:	USAFA	27			O-1	20
	OTS	28			E-8	7
	ROTC	60			E-7	28
	Other	17			E-6	24
Supervisor:	Yes	159			E-5	26
	No	86			E-4	13
Days TDY:	10 or less	73			E-3	12
	11-20	43			E-2	2
	21-40	50	Years on Active Duty:		0-5	70
	41-80	43			6-10	36
	81-160	28			11-15	53
	More than 160	7			16-20	64
Have Been Remote:	Yes	91			21+	21
	No	153				

N=247

Survey

The survey inquired about the attitudes of the respondent concerning fraternization. The survey was divided into seven sections, five aspects of fraternization, training, and demographic information. The entire survey can be found in the Appendix.

Norms. The questions measuring norms asked about the members' attitudes with regard to the way fraternization was treated and viewed within their current organization. This is in an effort to determine how units implement the Air Force fraternization policy. These items were measured on a seven point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Statistics for these items and the construct norms are listed in Table 2.

Table 2
Statistics for Norms

Item	Alpha	M	SD
Norms	**0.74**	4.99	**4.65**
My commander expects to be informed of unprofessional relationships.		5.64	1.57
Unprofessional relationships are typically punished in my unit.		4.55	1.51
Fraternization is not typically brought to the commander's attention. (R)		4.60	1.52
Suspected unprofessional relationships are addressed quickly in my unit.		4.63	1.48

N=247

Training. In an effort to determine whether or not Air Force members are being adequately trained a series of training questions were included in the survey. Respondents were asked to identify the methods of training (organizational briefing, memo from their commander, etc.) that they had received both at the time they entered the Air Force and at any subsequent training they had received. This construct is referring to formal training that members have received.

Need. The purpose of the construct need is to determine if members feel there is a need for the fraternization policy in the Air Force. Respondents were given a series of

statements regarding the need of officer/enlisted relationships and asked to what existent they agreed from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The statistics for those items and the construct need are listed in Table 3.

Table 3
Statistics for Need

Item	Alpha	M	SD
Need	**0.78**	**4.18**	**8.95**
Some fraternization is unavoidable in my unit.		4.22	1.83
Reasons exist for fraternization to occur.		4.18	1.82
Officers and enlisted members should not have relationships outside of work. (R)		4.32	1.81
Same gender officer/enlisted friendships do not damage the Air Force.		4.10	1.83
The Air Force needs to set limits for its members' off-duty time. (R)		3.82	1.90
The Air Force needs does not need a policy regarding fraternization.		2.61	1.55
The Air Force should not interfere with the private lives of its members.		3.68	1.92
The current regulations regarding relationships are useful to the Air Force. (R)		3.29	1.44

N=247

Fraternizing. Fraternizing is the extent to which officers and enlisted members have participated in activities commonly perceived to be or explicitly stated to be fraternization. The level of fraternization that has occurred in the respondent's current organization was measured by providing the respondent with a list of activities. Respondents were asked to rate the occurrence of each on a five-point scale. This scale ranged from almost never to almost always with an additional option if the member had

not witnessed the event. Each of the activities listed have been interpreted as fraternization previously or are expressly addressed in AFI 36-2909. This set of questions can provide information regarding the extent to which fraternization is occurring in each respondent's unit. Statistics for these items and the construct fraternizing are listed in Table 4.

Table 4
Statistics for Fraternizing

Item	Alpha	M	SD
Fraternizing	**0.87**	**1.32**	**0.77**
Gamble (e.g. playing cards, football pools, going to casino)		0.83	1.34
Party outside of work (e.g. going to bars, dance clubs, parties)		1.56	1.44
Lend or borrow money		0.24	0.67
Socialize on weekends (e.g. dinner, sporting events, movies)		1.54	1.35
Discuss personal issues (e.g. confide in each other)		1.99	1.43
Engage in business activities outside of work (e.g. selling, investing, partnering)		0.28	0.79
Ask for personal favors (e.g. home or auto maintenance)		1.00	1.26
Participate in activites outside of work (e.g. sports or hobbies)		2.80	1.26
Reguarly go to lunch		2.03	1.35
Share a ride to work		0.91	1.22

N=247

Consequences. Consequences applies to those acts that occur as a result of the fraternization taking place in the unit that affect specific members, groups of members, or the unit as a whole. Respondents were asked to what extent they believed certain acts

demonstrating favoritism have occurred in their organization as a result of the acts listed in the fraternizing items. These items also inquired about members' perceptions of the extent to which the acts listed under fraternizing have caused a negative impact on their unit. Items were measured using a seven point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Respondents skipped these questions, as directed if they had not witnessed any of the behaviors listed in the fraternizing items. When analyzed responses from members who had not witnessed fraternization were included. Statistics for these items and the construct consequences are listed in Table 5.

Table 5
Statistics for Consequences

Item	Alpha	M	SD
Consequences	**0.92**	**2.44**	**1.46**
Preferred tasks are assigned based on special relationships.		2.06	1.45
Some members receive special treatment.		2.50	1.80
Pet projects are given to the same workers regularly.		2.43	1.70
Some members of the organization have an inappropriate influence on their superivsor.		2.59	1.75
Leaders have lost respect from their subordinates.		2.55	1.92
Personnel lack respect for their unit leaders.		2.68	1.90
Unit morale is low.		2.81	1.97
Organizational goals are abandoned for personal interests.		2.17	1.57
People are less motivated to do their jobs.		2.56	1.75
The unit has difficulty performing their mission.		2.06	1.48

N=247

Tolerance. To measure tolerance respondents were provided with a list of 19 activities and were asked to rate each on the appropriateness for an enlisted member and an officer to participate in together. These items were chosen based on a small test survey. A list of 48 activities was given to 45 Air Force members to rate on a seven point scale measuring the appropriateness of the activity for officers and enlisted members to participate in together. The mean and standard deviation for each item was calculated to determine which point along the scale (1-7) they represented. Based on this information activities representing each point along the scale with minimum deviations were chosen for the survey. Appropriateness for these activities was measured on a seven-point scale with only the endpoints anchored (never and always). For this construct, half of the surveys were based on the members being in the same chain of command while the other 400 surveys were based on the members being in different chains of command. This allowed the testing of hypothesis nine, that members will be more tolerant of fraternization when the individuals involved are not in the same chain of command. Statistics for these items and the construct tolerance are listed in Table 6. The items in this table have been sorted by their means, from least tolerable to most. As mentioned earlier, this survey was divided into two groups for this construct. Thus, the statistics for each of these groups can be found in Table 7. These items have been sorted according to the mean values, from least to most tolerable for the outside the chain of command group.

Table 6
Statistics for Tolerance

Item	Alpha	M	SD
Tolerance	**0.93**	**3.78**	**0.96**
Loan money for a business		1.40	0.93
Loan money to each other because of debt		1.47	0.95
Spend the night at each other's residence		1.81	1.31
Vacation together		1.93	1.35
Play poker together on the weekends		2.42	1.67
Exchange gifts		2.75	1.59
Go to the movies together		2.75	1.68
Go fishing together		3.49	1.61
Have dinner together while TDY		3.49	1.56
Call each other after duty hours		3.94	1.65
Discuss their personal lives		4.05	1.45
Help each other move		4.34	1.70
Have lunch together		4.66	1.55
Go to the gym together		4.77	1.61
Attend the same party		5.16	1.51
Have dinner together while TDY		5.17	1.44
Work at the youth center together		5.78	1.49
Sing together in the chapel choir		6.12	1.30
Be members of the same base sports team		6.23	1.11

N=247

Table 7

Statistics for Tolerance by Chain of Command

Item		Out			In	
	Alpha	M	SD	Alpha	M	SD
Tolerance	**0.94**	**3.93**	**1.05**	**0.91**	**3.60**	**0.83**
Loan money for a business		1.48	1.00		1.32	0.83
Loan money to each other because of debt		1.56	1.04		1.35	0.84
Spend the night at each other's residence		2.03	1.45		1.56	1.08
Vacation together		2.22	1.48		1.60	1.09
Play poker together on the weekends		2.63	1.79		2.18	1.50
Exchange gifts		2.96	1.66		2.52	1.48
Go to the movies together		3.05	1.77		2.41	1.50
Have dinner together while TDY		3.69	1.59		3.28	1.50
Go fishing together		3.85	1.66		3.07	1.45
Call each other after duty hours		4.04	1.62		3.84	1.68
Discuss their personal lives		4.21	1.44		3.88	1.45
Help each other move		4.50	1.81		4.15	1.55
Have lunch together		4.79	1.52		4.51	1.57
Go to the gym together		4.88	1.64		4.65	1.58
Attend the same party		5.23	1.55		5.09	1.46
Have dinner together while TDY		5.24	1.43		5.09	1.46
Work at the youth center together		5.89	1.37		5.66	1.60
Sing together in the chapel choir		6.18	1.26		6.06	1.35
Be members of the same base sports team		6.27	1.10		6.18	1.12

N=247

Demographic data was also collected on each respondent. Collected information included gender, marital status, rank, years on active duty, whether or not they are a supervisor, number of days they were TDY in the last 12 months, and if they had ever been stationed at a remote assignment, additionally officers were asked from what source they received their commission. Each of these questions was asked to place the individual in groups for analysis to determine if a pattern existed in attitudes toward fraternization.

Data Analysis

As discussed in Chapter II, the goal of the research effort is to determine the extent of the causal relationships between the different aspects of fraternization. As such the research model has characteristics that must be taken into consideration when selecting an analytical method. The first of these is the number of dependent variables, in this case four. Additionally there is the fact that several of the constructs in the model mediate relationships between two other variables. Structural equation modeling was selected because of its ability to accommodate these requirements.

Each of these measured variables represented one of the constructs in the model, that is, each construct had one measured variable. Each of the constructs was measured using multiple items. With the exception of training each item set was averaged into one measure. Training was summated into one measure.

Structural equation modeling was performed to determine the relationships shown in the path diagram in Figure 2. This analysis was used to test hypotheses one through eight, addressed in Chapter II. The data for this analysis is the observed covariance

matrix for the six variables involved. In this analysis z scores of 1.65 or higher in the beta, gamma, and psi matrices indicate one tailed significance at the .05 level. Additionally, the goodness of the model fit will be determined. The absolute fit will be measured using the p value for chi-squared (χ^2), standardized root mean square residual (Std RMR), and goodness of fit index (GFI). The parsimonious fit, that it the fit given the complications of the model, will be assessed using the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and the p value for RMSEA. Finally, the relative fit of the model will be determined using the comparative fit index (CFI). The indicators of good fit for all of these statistics can be found in Table 8. Structural equation modeling also estimates the error, for each of the measured variable and for each dependent construct in the model.
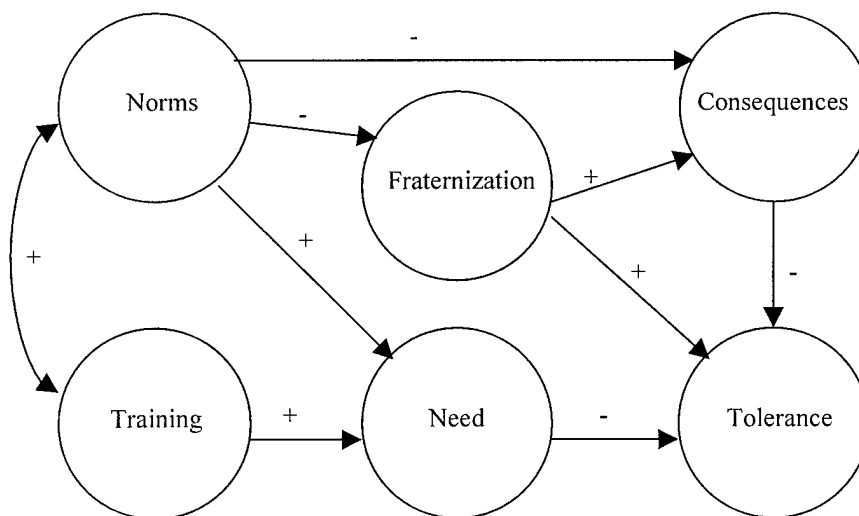

Figure 2 Fraternization Model

Table 8
Goodness of Fit Statistics

Measure	Indication of Good Fit
p ($\chi 2$)	> .05
Std RMR	< .05
GFI	> .90
RMSEA	< .08
p (RMSEA)	> .05
CFI	> .90

Additionally, a comparison of means was performed to test hypotheses 10 and 11. This analysis compares the two groups in the hypothesis. For hypothesis 10 these groups are whether or not the individuals are in the same chain of command. The groups for hypothesis 11 are based on whether or not the respondent has ever been to a remote assignment. A *t* test of 1.65 or greater with a small significance level indicates a significant difference in the means of the two groups at the .05 level. The results of this test have the potential to provide data that would suggest a practical change in the fraternization policy.

Summary

In short, this research effort uses data collected via a survey on the subject of fraternization. Data was collected from members across the Air Force. To analyze this data structural equation modeling was used along with some comparison of means to test the hypotheses discussed in Chapter II. The results of this analysis will be discussed in Chapter IV.

Introduction

In this chapter the results of the analysis discussed in Chapter III will be discussed. Results will be preceded by a discussion of the normality of the data. The results of the structural equation modeling, comparison of means, and regression will follow.

Normality Check for Survey

There are 247 data points, well above the requirement of 30 to invoke the central limit theorem for normality. To further assess the normality of the data used in the research effort the skewness and kurtosis for each variable in the model was measured. The results are provided in Table 9. Each of these values is within ±2.58, which indicates that each lies within the bounds to assume normality.

Table 9
Skewness and Kurtosis Measures

Item	Mean	Skewness	Kurtosis	Alpha	Error Variance
Tolerance	71.16	0.22	0.38	0.93	0.06
Norms	19.22	-0.48	0.01	0.74	0.30
Need	30.05	-0.17	-0.30	0.79	0.26
Fraternizing	10.80	0.91	0.77	0.87	0.08
Consequences	0.38	1.06	0.29	0.95	0.11
Training	2.40	0.52	-0.29	0.72	1.93

N=247

The correlation matrix for the constructs is presented in Table 10. The highest correlation occurs between need and tolerance. All but four of the correlations are significant at the .05 level with most significant at the .01 level.

Table 10
Correlation Matrix

	NORMS	NEED	FRATERNIZATION	CONSEQUENCES	TOLERANCE	TRAINING
NORMS	1.000					
NEED	.156**	1.000				
FRATERNIZATION	-.203**	-.208**	1.000			
CONSEQUENCES	-.343**	.053	.326**	1.000		
TOLERANCE	-.018	-.463**	.295**	-.119*	1.000	
TRAINING	.139*	.137*	-.064	-.146*	-0.044	1.000

N=247
* Significant at the .05 level
** Significant at the .01 level

Structural Equation Modeling

As discussed in Chapter III structural equation modeling using the covariance matrix (Table 11) of the variables was performed. The exogenous variables in the model are norms and training and the endogenous variables are tolerance, fraternizing, need, and consequences. In building the model to be analyzed each path in Figure 3 was included.

Table 11
Covariance Matrix

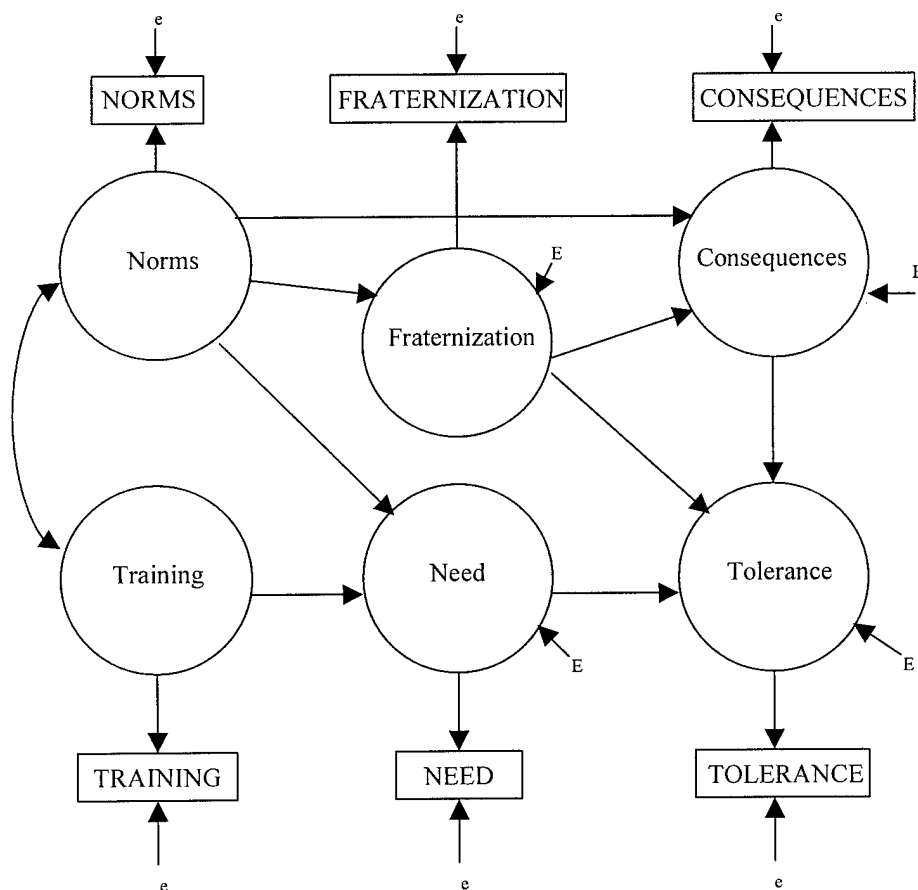|	NORMS	NEED	FRATERNIZING	CONSEQUENCES	TOLERANCE	TRAINING
NORMS	1.09					
NEED	0.18	1.21				
FRATERNIZING	-0.16	-0.18	0.59			
CONSEQUENCES	-0.52	0.08	0.37	2.13		
TOLERANCE	-0.02	-0.49	0.22	-0.17	0.92	
TRAINING	0.38	0.40	-0.13	-0.56	-0.11	6.98

N=335

Figure 3 Fraternization Model

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Although there are some deviations from a good model fit, the overall picture is good. Measures of absolute fit include chi-squared and its p-value, the standardized root mean square residual, and the goodness of fit index. The reported chi-squared (20.33) is providing the test difference between the predicted and observed covariance matrices. For this model the p-value for chi-squared is 0.0024, which is not above the desired .05 mark of good fit. The standardized root mean square residual (Std RMR) is the average absolute discrepancy between the predicted and observed covariance matrices. Here, the Std RMR is .056, which is slightly greater than the maximum .05 indicator of good fit. Finally, the goodness of fit index (GFI) provides an estimate of the variance accounted for in the model and is testing for perfect fit of the model. This model's GFI is .97, which certainly meets the desired limit of .90.

Measures of parsimonious fit include the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and the p-value for the RMSEA. These items measure the goodness of fit given the complication of the model. The RMSEA considers the maximum likelihood fit as a function of the degrees of freedom where fewer degrees of freedom indicate a more complicated model. Generally an RMSEA less than .08 indicates good model fit; here the RMSEA is .099, which is higher than desired. Additionally, the p-value is .039, which is not greater than .05 as would be ideal. This p-value measure is a test of close fit, which tests the null hypothesis that RMSEA is less than .05.

Finally there is a measure of relative fit, the comparative fit index (CFI) that considers the relative fit of the model to the null model. Ideally, the CFI is above .90 as it is here (.91). A summary of these measures is included in Table 12.

Table 12
Goodness of Fit Statistics

Measure	Indication of Good Fit	Fraternization Model
Chi-squared		20.33
p (χ2)	> .05	0.0024
Std RMR	< .05	0.056
GFI	> .90	0.97
RMSEA	< .08	0.099
p (RMSEA)	> .05	0.039
CFI	> .90	0.91

Since this research effort is examining one-sided relationships a z score of 1.65 or greater will be considered significant for the beta, gamma, and phi matrices. Although there is no specific cut off for the standard error estimate in these matrices a low estimate is desired. The beta matrix provides information on the relationships between endogenous variables as defined in the model. The gamma matrix demonstrates the relationships between exogenous variables and endogenous variables included in the model. The phi matrix provides information regarding relationships between exogenous variables as prescribed in the model. The psi matrix is subject to the same numeric standards. The psi matrix provides information on the covariances between residual error for latent y variables, or endogenous variables.

The results of the analysis are provided along the paths in Figure 4. The absolute values of the z scores (for purposes of showing the range of significance) range from 3.62 for the path from consequences to tolerance to 7.16 for the path from need to tolerance. Each one is significant with acceptable standard error estimates. Each of these measures

support the direction of the relationship predicted in Chapter II. The measures in the gamma matrix support the hypotheses of Chapter II, absolute z scores range from 1.72 for the path from training to need to 4.64 for the path from norms to consequences which had an acceptable standard error estimate. Since there are only two exogenous variables in the model there is only one value in the phi matrix, that representing the correlation path between norms and training. The z score is 2.36 with a standard error estimate of .18. As expected this relationship is positive.
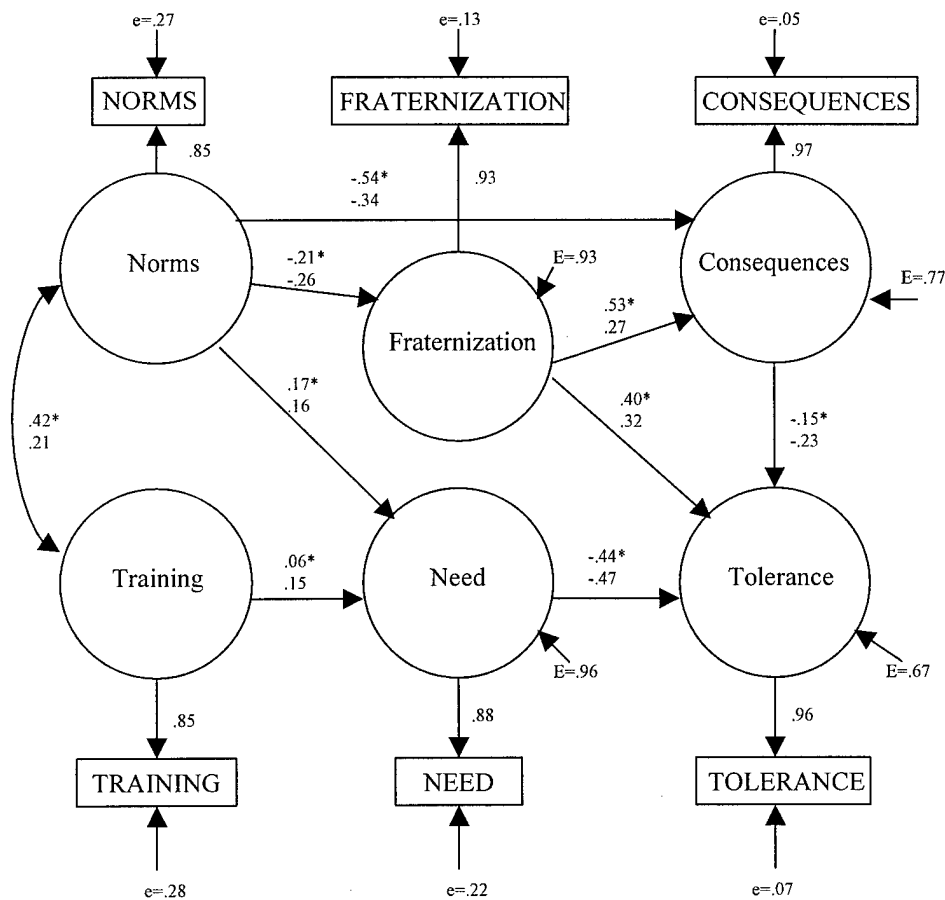

Figure 4 Analyzed Fraternization Model

Since the model is not perfect additional analysis was performed. To determine if additional paths should be added to the model a check of the modification indices was conducted. Any value in the modification indices that is above the critical value of chi-squared for one degree of freedom, 3.84 needs to be examined for a plausible theoretical explanation. Although the modification indices suggested adding a number of paths, only two made theoretical sense. These were from fraternization to need and from consequences to need. Theoretically these make sense because people are influenced by many factors, their environment being one of them. The questions regarding fraternization that were in the survey were inquiring about the amount of fraternization that members have seen in their units in the past the consequences questions were also in regards to what has happened. Thus, these fraternization acts and the consequences suffered as a result are part of the work environment. As a result these factors influence members perceptions of the need for the fraternization policy. These factors do not take the place of formal training or unit implementation of the policy, but are in addition to those influences. Adding these paths results in improved goodness of fit statistics as seen in Table 13. With the addition of these two paths the model meets each of the goodness of fit indices. These additions also result in no modification indices over the 3.84 level of concern. This adjusted fraternization model with analysis can be seen in Figure 5.

Table 13
Goodness of Fit Indices for Adjusted Fraternization Model

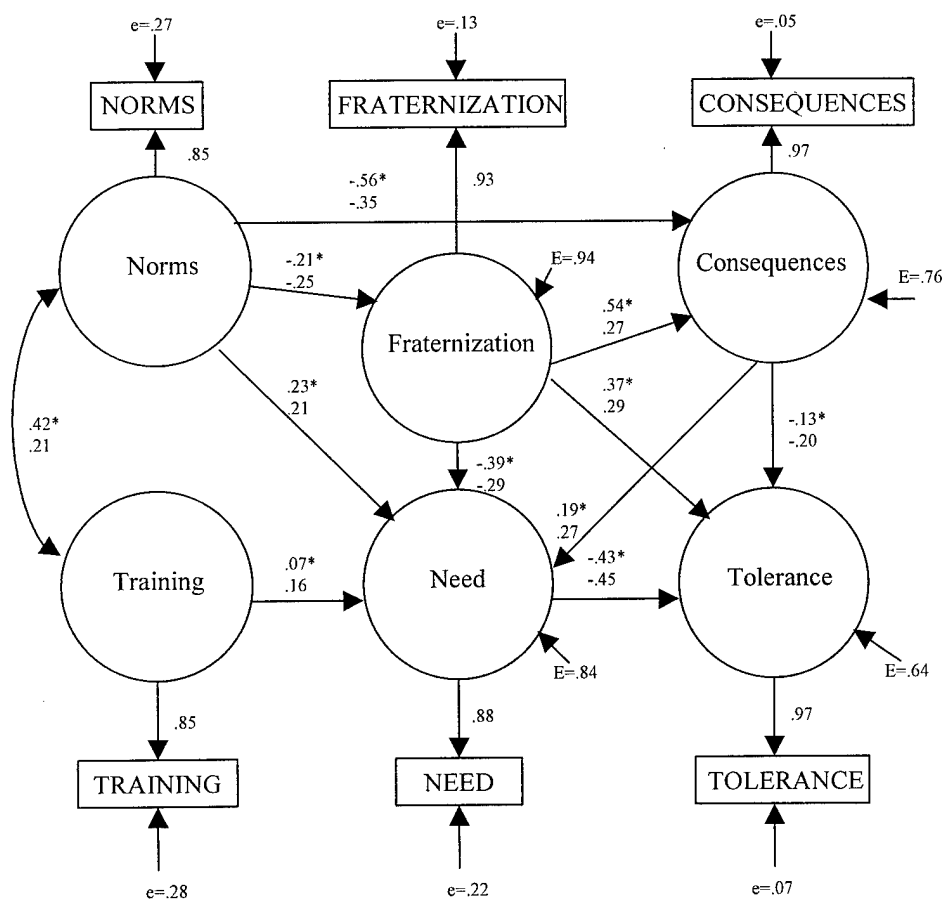| Measure	Indication of Good Fit	Fraternization Model	Adjusted Fraternization Model
Chi-squared		20.33	2.92
p (χ^2)	> .05	0.0024	0.57
Std RMR	< .05	0.056	0.02
GFI	> .90	0.97	1.00
RMSEA	< .08	0.099	0.00
p (RMSEA)	> .05	0.039	0.80
CFI	> .90	0.91	1.00

Figure 5 Adjusted Fraternization Model

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Hypotheses one through eight are supported by these results. In essence, members' tolerance levels are associated with their perception of the need for the policy and the fraternization and consequences occurring in their unit. Members' perceptions of need for policy are associated with the strength of their unit's fraternization policy, the formal training that they received, the number of fraternization acts and consequences that have occurred in their unit. Additionally, a unit's fraternization policy is associated with the amount of fraternization and consequences that are suffered.

Comparison of Means

Comparison of means analysis was performed on the data twice. The first test was performed on the two groups of surveys where group one included responses to the tolerance portion of the survey for members not in the same chain of command. Group two was composed of responses where the members involved were in the same chain of command. Statistics for this test are provided in Table 14. The data showed that group one had a mean of 73.49 and group two of 68.62. The mean difference between the two is 4.87 with a standard error difference of 2.07. The *t* test resulted in a *t* score of 2.36 based on 331.97 degrees of freedom. For this test the p-value was .0095 for a one tailed test, which meets the requirement of less than .05 for significance. Therefore it can be deduced that Air Force members are less tolerant of fraternization when it occurs between members of the same chain of command. These results directly support hypothesis nine from Chapter II.

Table 14

Comparison of Means Statistics For Chain of Command

Item	N	M	SD	Std. Error Mean
Not in same chain of command	175	73.49	20.31	1.53
In same chain of command	160	68.62	17.55	1.39

The second comparison of means analysis was performed on two groups based on whether or not respondents had ever been assigned to a remote location. Group one was comprised of those who had not, while group two consisted of those who had. Again, tolerance level was the variable in question. Statistics for these groups are provided in Table 15. Means for the two groups were 72.85 and 68.52, respectively. The difference in means is 4.33 with a standard error difference of 2.09. The t test resulted in a t score of 2.07. The associated p-value for a one-tailed test was .02, which is under .05 as required for significance. This finding does not support hypothesis 10, the tested hypothesis. In fact, the findings are opposite of the expected results and therefore suggest that Air Force members who have been stationed at a remote assignment are actually less tolerant than members who have never been to a remote location. The hypothesis was based on the results of Luther and Thurston (1999), which found a higher proportion of reprimands verses dismissals at remote locations than at CONUS stations. The results of this analysis show that members who have been assigned to remote locations are less tolerant than those who have not. This may be due to overcompensation on the part of members who have experienced a more liberal environment concerning fraternization and have then found themselves facing harsher consequences for fraternization.

Table 15
Comparison of Means Statistics for Remote

Item	N	M	SD	Std. Error Mean
Have not been remote	206	72.85	19.28	1.34
Have been remote	124	68.52	17.85	1.60

To determine if the results of the comparison of means for the remote groups was affected by the chain of command groups a univariate analysis was performed. This analysis added an interaction term for chain of command and remote. Results of this analysis showed that at the .05 level both remote and chain of command are significant, but the interaction of those items is not. This is demonstrated through the use of the F statistic, which is .094 for the interaction term; the associated significance level is .759 greatly exceeding the .05 requirement. These results can be seen in Table 16. Thus, the results of the comparison of means test stand. Members who have not been assigned to a remote location are more tolerant than those who have. These results were not significantly influenced by the chain of command variable.

Table 16
Results of Univariate Analysis on Tolerance

Item	F	Significance
Intercept	4372.89	0.00
Chain of command	4.33	0.04
Remote	4.60	0.03
Interaction	0.09	0.76

Summary

This chapter discussed the analysis of the data gathered for the research effort. Of the eleven hypotheses presented nine were supported by the analysis performed. One hypothesis, that members who have been assigned to a remote location at some point in their career will be more tolerant of fraternization was not supported. Hypothesis 11 was marginally supported suggesting weaknesses in the training process for fraternization. A discussion of these findings will be presented in Chapter V.

V. Conclusion

Introduction

This research effort examined attitudes and perceptions of Air Force members in the area of fraternization. This chapter reviews the findings of this research effort. Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are also addressed.

Discussion

As stated in Chapter IV responses from 247 Air Force members were used in the analysis performed. These 247 responses were from those members who had witnessed fraternization and who answered all items on the survey. In total 335 responses were received. Of those, 85.4% reported having witnessed some degree of fraternization in their current unit. This indicates that fraternization is a problem across the Air Force. However, of those who reported witnessing fraternization only 3.3% reported that it occurs frequently or more often. In fact, nearly half (47.2%) of those who reported witnessing fraternization indicated it almost never occurred. Although fraternization is occurring across the Air Force and is a problem, it is not a rampant problem. These numbers refer to the average levels of fraternization. Some acts occur more often than others. Of the acts listed members reported participating in activities outside of work as occurring most frequently. This act was reported as occurring frequently or almost always by 24.2% of the members who reported witnessing fraternization.

Similar analysis showed that of the members who reported witnessing fraternization only 1.7% strongly believed the fraternization had caused the negative consequences asked about. These negative consequences included the type of

consequences addressed in AFI 36-2909. Of the members who acknowledged the connection between the fraternization they had witnessed and the negative consequences low unit morale was the consequence that was caused directly by the fraternization. The least reported causal connection was the unit having difficulty performing its mission. Thus, the regulation is correct in its assessment that negative consequences are caused by the occurrence of fraternization.

Analysis performed on the collected data supported hypotheses one through nine. Each predicted path between the variables examined in this study along with two additional paths were shown to be significant in the direction (positive or negative) expected. A discussion of what these results mean for the Air Force follows.

Many Air Force policies prohibiting social behaviors (such as living together out of wedlock) have been phased out over the years, however, the policy against fraternization still remains. This is because of the professional implications of rank differences. Officers have authority or influence over all enlisted members they encounter. This can be seen through the fact that they can reprimand any enlisted member they find to be behaving inappropriately. As such, whether in the same chain of command or not officers can affect enlisted members' careers. To avoid abuse of this power, relationships between these two groups are limited by the fraternization policy. They are limited in such a way that associative friendships are acceptable but reciprocal and receptive friendships are not.

The Air Force fraternization policy was not written with the different types of friendships in mind. However, while the policy prohibits relationships that involve a large amount of familiarity (reciprocal and receptive), it encourages relationships based

purely on the specific circumstances (associative) of working together. Relationships in the workplace that boost unit morale and do not spill over to members' social lives are acceptable and to some extent encouraged by the Air Force.

As discussed in Chapter II, the Air Force distinction between officers and enlisted personnel is unnatural in society. People joining the Air Force need to be socialized into the environment. If the Air Force does not want fraternization to occur among its members, this socialization must include informing and training members on the distinction between officers and enlisted members. Without this aspect of socialization members will join the ranks of the Air Force without the mindset that officers and enlisted members are not to become too familiar. Since perception is such a large part of fraternization, this mindset is fundamental in ensuring that fraternization does not occur, especially considering the fact that this distinction lies only in the military. Socialization providing the mindset that officer/enlisted relationships are unacceptable is the basis for future efforts to prevent fraternization. The Air Force needs to take this action to create an environment where the efforts of commanders to decrease tolerance and prevent fraternization can make a difference.

Additionally, the Air Force needs to inform commanders of the importance of taking their responsibility regarding fraternization seriously. If the Air Force does not want fraternization to occur among its members it needs to take action to reduce members' tolerance of those acts constituting fraternization. This research has shown that members tolerance is affected by three factors their perception of the need for the policy, the amount of fraternization that has occurred in their organization, and the number of consequences that their organization has experienced due to fraternization.

Commanders do not have the ability to change these factors directly. However, this research has shown that these factors are all influenced by formal training, implementation of the policy, or both.

This research indicates that if the Air Force does not want its members to be tolerant of fraternization, but rather wants members to follow the policy, it should work to get members to perceive a need for the policy. To accomplish this, the Air Force must know what influences that perception. The data suggested that members' perceptions of the need for fraternization is determined by a combination of the formal training they receive, the way in which their unit implements the Air Force fraternization policy, the amount of fraternization that has occurred in their unit, and the associated negative consequences experienced by their unit. A strong fraternization policy in their unit, formal training, and a high number of negative consequences cause members to perceive a need for the fraternization policy. This indicates that the Air Force should enforce the training requirement set forth in AFI 36-2909 and ensure commanders know the fraternization policy so that they can implement it properly. By using resources to accomplish training and ensuring proper implementation the Air Force can influence members perceptions such that members realize the need for the policy which in turn will lower members tolerance to those prohibited acts.

Members' tolerance of fraternization is also influenced directly by the amount of fraternization that has occurred within the unit. This relationship is such that when the amount of fraternization is higher members' tolerance is higher. This suggests that the more fraternization that an organization permits the more tolerant its members will become. The amount of fraternization that occurs was found to be determined by the

implementation of the Air Force fraternization policy. Analysis suggested that organizations with a strong fraternization policy have fewer fraternization acts among its members. Thus, these same organizations will have less tolerant members than organizations without proper implementation. Accordingly, the Air Force should ensure proper implementation to reduce the number of fraternization cases in the future, which should lower members' tolerance of fraternization over time.

Finally, members' tolerance of fraternization is influenced by the negative consequences that have occurred in their organization. Implementation of the fraternization policy and the amount of fraternization that has occurred in the organization directly affect the number of consequences that the organization experiences. Fraternization and consequences have a direct, positive relationship where an increase in fraternization results in an increase in consequences. However, strong implementation of the fraternization policy results in decreased consequences. These results also suggest the Air Force should focus its efforts on ensuring proper implementation of the policy. Prior implementation can directly influence negative consequences and indirectly influences consequences through fraternization. Thus, proper implementation can reduce the consequences experience.

The general implication of the study is that the Air Force should enforce the training requirement of AFI 36-2909 and develop ways to ensure proper implementation of the Air Force fraternization policy across the Air Force. It seems this is the best way to decrease members' tolerance of fraternization.

Commanders have two tools at their disposal to influence their members. The first is formal training which, to be most effective, should occur in a variety of ways such

as briefings, memos, or open discussions. This provides members with the specifics of the policy, including what is and is not allowed and why. This is vital considering many members made the comment that whether or not an act constitutes fraternization depends on the situation including the nature of the relationship (romantic or platonic) and the gender of the individuals involved (same gender or different gender). Commanders can also indirectly influence tolerance through proper implementation of the policy. To accomplish this commanders must know the policy and must make it known to members that they are expected to follow it. This requires commanders to actively discourage fraternization and to take action immediately when fraternization does occur. This implementation must be consistent both in the action the commander takes and in the punishments that are handed out. Comments were voiced showing concern for the lack of consistency and lack of discipline in the area of fraternization. These concerns demonstrate that members feel some need for consistency and discipline. Without this implementation commanders may find their members share the sentiment of the Technical Sergeant who simply stated, "Get out of my private life," the same sentiment that took center stage during the Kelly Flynn case. By doing these two things commanders can affect the perception of need, amount of fraternization, number of consequences such that members will not be tolerant of fraternization acts.

Although this policy exists and the reasons for it are sound, members still express some need for fraternization. A Master Sergeant who is a member of an organization that has a high temporary duty yonder rate specifically identifies the lack of support that would result if the fraternization policy were strictly followed. Similar concerns were voiced by members in flying organizations where officer pilots and enlisted aircrew

members are forced to develop close bonds. Other respondents expressed concern about the limitations of the current policy. One Airman First Class spoke of feeling alienated in the Air Force because his base takes this policy to such an extreme that he and his wife were forced to go off base for religious services. He went on to say that due to his age (26) he did not have much in common with members of similar rank. Although it is not likely that his experience is the norm across the Air Force, it does provide evidence of the negative impact that can occur when the policy is enforced to strongly. That is, in such a way that relationships permitted by the regulation are not allowed in a particular unit. Additionally, there can be too little interaction between officers and enlisted members when the regulation regarding fraternization is strongly enforced.

The analysis performed supported hypothesis ten showing that members are less tolerant of fraternization when the members involved are in the same chain of command. This may be because the negative effects realized through the occurrence of fraternization may not be evident when the two members are not in the same chain of command. These restrictions on the lives of members may be unnecessary to prevent the problems that the policy is intended to prevent.

Hypothesis eleven was not supported by the analysis performed. It was found that members who have been assigned to a remote location are less tolerant of fraternization than those who have not. This unexpected result may be due to overcompensation on the part of members who have returned from remote assignments to conform to the norms of their new stateside unit. Another possible explanation is that members who have been remote know the extent that fraternization is necessary at remote locations and do not see that type of need at CONUS locations. Members at remote locations have fewer choices

for social company because of the fact that there are generally fewer members than at most CONUS locations. As such when members return from those locations they realize that members at CONUS locations have choices and do not need to rely on what would be considered fraternization.

Limitations

There are many limitations in this study. The first of these is the nature of the study. Since fraternization is a sensitive topic some types of attitudes and areas of interest for the study concerning actual behaviors of Air Force members could not be asked. Also due to the sensitive nature of the subject there is a possibility that the data is skewed to reflect the way the policy reads as opposed to the way things actually are. It is also likely that not all of the respondents had enough knowledge to answer some of the questions, especially in the area of norms, which addressed the way in which the fraternization policy is implemented within their organization. Another limitation is the fact that the demographics of the data are weighted at the high end of the rank structure in both the enlisted ranks and officer ranks. This is not representative of the actual Air Force population. These limitations suggest the need for further research in the area of fraternization.

Recommendations

As the limitations suggest there is a need for more research in this area. Future research should include a broader look at unprofessional relationships. Since it has been shown that behaviors constituting fraternization cause problems both for the individuals

in the organization and the organization itself the same may be true for relationships of an unprofessional nature between company grade and field grade officers or between airmen and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) or between NCOs and senior NCOs.

Further investigations into the difference of attitudes when the members are in the same chain of command verses when they are not would be beneficial. If this is found to be true as with the tolerance level in this project it may provide information to change the policy such that it is less restrictive on relationships between members not in the same chain of command.

A similar research project across the Department of Defense would be beneficial to determine if these findings are universal or specific to the Air Force. If these phenomenon are found in all of the services then the policies could be changed such that they are still uniform and clear, yet less restrictive.

Conclusion

This research effort examined Air Force members' attitudes toward the current fraternization policy, specifically their tolerance toward acts constituting fraternization. Data was collected through a survey and via the web for six variables: norms, need, training, fraternization, consequences, and tolerance. Analysis was performed on this data to determine the relationships between the variables and test the hypotheses presented in Chapter II. The results of this research effort suggest that members' tolerance is determined by three things fraternization, consequences, and the perception of need for the policy.

SCN 00-108

Organizational Survey for

A SURVEY TO ASSESS ATTITUDES TOWARD THE

AIR FORCE FRATERNIZATION POLICY

Privacy Notice

The following information is provided as required by the Privacy Act of 1974:

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to determine the attitudes of Air Force members toward the fraternization policy and to determine how practice and policy compare on fraternization.

Routine Use: The results will be used to help develop new and more effective training materials and to help determine the direction of new policy regarding fraternization. No analysis of individual responses will be conducted and only members of the research team will be permitted access to the raw data.

Participation: Participations is VOLUNTARY. No adverse action will be taken against any member who does not participate in this survey or who does not complete any part of the survey.

Conducted by the
AIR FORCE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
AIR UNIVERSITY (AETC)
DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

for

United States Air Force, Office of the Judge Advocate General

Please consider the following statements and select the number that indicates the extent that you think the activity is appropriate for an officer and enlisted person that **are** in the same chain of command.

	← Never Always →
1. Have dinner together while TDY.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
2. Discuss their personal lives.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
3. Go fishing together.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
4. Vacation together.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
5. Go to the gym together.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
6. Loan money to each other because of debt.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
7. Help each other move.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
8. Have dinner together.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
9. Exchange gifts.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
10. Sing together in the chapel choir.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
11. Call each other after duty hours.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
12. Loan money for a business.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
13. Attend the same party.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
14. Play poker together on the weekends.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
15. Go to the movies together.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
16. Work at the youth center together.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
17. Have lunch together.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
18. Be members of the same base sports team.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
19. Spend the night at each other's residence.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Please think about the unit you are currently assigned to and indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Slightly Disagree	4 Neutral	5 Slightly Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree

20. Cases of fraternization are considered private in my unit.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
21. My commander does not discourage fraternization in our unit.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
22. My commander expects to be informed of unprofessional relationships.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
23. Unprofessional relationships are typically punished in my unit.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
24. Fraternization is not typically brought to the commander's attention.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
25. Suspected unprofessional relationships are addressed quickly in my unit.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
26. Members of my unit have been accused of fraternization.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Please indicate the extent to which you agree each of the following statements is true in your unit.

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Slightly Disagree	4 Neutral	5 Slightly Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree

27. Some fraternization is unavoidable in my unit.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
28. Reasons exist for fraternization to occur.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
29. Officers and enlisted members should not have relationships outside of work.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
30. Same gender officer/enlisted friendships do not damage the Air Force.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
31. The Air Force needs to set limits for its members' off-duty relationships.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
32. The Air Force does not need a policy regarding fraternization.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
33. The Air Force should not interfere with the private lives of its members.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
34. The current regulations regarding relationships are useful to the Air Force.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Please indicate the extent the following behaviors have occurred between officers and enlisted members while you have been assigned to your current unit.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Have Not Witnessed	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always

35. Gamble (e.g. playing cards, football pools, going to casino)	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤
36. Party outside of work (e.g. going to bars, dance clubs, parties)	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤
37. Lend or borrow money	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤
38. Socialize on weekends (e.g. dinner, sporting events, movies)	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤
39. Discuss personal issues (e.g. confide in each other)	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤
40. Engage in business activities outside of work (e.g. selling, investing, partnering)	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤
41. Ask for personal favors (e.g. home or auto maintenance)	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤
42. Participate in activities outside of work (e.g. sports or hobbies)	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤
43. Regularly go to lunch	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤
44. Share a ride to work	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤

Please indicate the extent you believe that unprofessional relationships in your unit have caused the following problems.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

45. Preferred tasks are assigned based on special relationships.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
46. Some members receive special treatment.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
47. Pet projects are given to the same workers regularly.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
48. Some members of the organization have an inappropriate influence on their supervisor.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
49. Leaders have lost respect from their subordinates.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
50. Personnel lack respect for their unit leaders.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
51. Unit morale is low.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
52. Organizational goals are abandoned for personal interests.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
53. People are less motivated to do their jobs.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
54. The unit has difficulty performing their mission.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦

Training

Did you learn about professional and unprofessional relationships in the work place as part of your basic training or commissioning program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

In what form(s) did this learning take place? Please check all that apply.

☐ Organizational briefing/lecture
☐ Review Air Force Instruction or Regulation
☐ Article in newspaper or magazine
☐ Personal discussion with supervisor
☐ Group discussion with supervisor
☐ Memo from supervisor
☐ Other (please describe below)

Have you received any information on professional and unprofessional relationships in the work place since you have come on active duty? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Through what source(s) did you receive this information? Please check all that apply.

☐ Organizational briefing/lecture
☐ Review Air Force Instruction or Regulation
☐ Article in newspaper or magazine
☐ Personal discussion with supervisor
☐ Group discussion with supervisor
☐ Memo from supervisor
☐ Other (please describe below)

When was the last time you received information about professional and unprofessional relationships in the work place?

In the last 6 months ①	In the last 12 months ②	In the last 2 years ③	In the last 5 years ④	More than 5 years ago ⑤

Do you believe you have received enough information from available sources concerning the current Air Force policy on professional and unprofessional relationships in the work place?

Too little ①	②	Just enough ③	④	Too much ⑤

Demographics

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

What is your marital status? ☐ Married ☐ Single

What is your current rank?
☐ O-1 ☐ O-2 ☐ O-3 ☐ O-4 ☐ O-5

☐ E-2 ☐ E-3 ☐ E-4 ☐ E-5 ☐ E-6 ☐ E-7 ☐ E-8

How many *years* have you been on active duty? _____

If you are an officer . . .
Commissioning Source?
☐ USAFA ☐ OTS ☐ ROTC ☐ Other

If other, please specify _____

Are you currently a supervisor? ☐ Yes ☐ No

In the last year, how many days were you TDY?
☐ 10 days or less
☐ 11-20
☐ 21-40
☐ 41-80
☐ 81-160
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Have you ever been assigned to a remote location? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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Vita

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Lieutenant Brandau was commissioned into the Air Force through Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps in August 1997. She attended Undergraduate Space and Missile Training and Missile Initial Qualifying Training at Vandenburg AFB, California. She was then assigned to the 319th missile squadron at F. E. Warren AFB, Wyoming. In August 1999, she entered the Graduate Acquisition program, Air Force Institute of Technology. Upon graduation she will be assigned to Air Mobility Command Headquarters, Scott AFB, Illinois.

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14. ABSTRACT

AFI 36-2909, provides the current policy on acceptable and unacceptable social interactions between Air Force members. The intent of distinguishing relationships as professional or unprofessional is to preserve proper respect for authority and maintain focus on the mission through professional relationships while avoiding the negative effects of unprofessional relationships. Fraternization is one unacceptable type, which governs relationships between officers and enlisted members.

There have long been differences between official policy and actual practice in the area of fraternization. These differences likely influence the acceptance of existing policy, and the amount of tolerance toward behaviors that Air Force policy would consider unprofessional. High tolerance of fraternization acts among Air Force members will likely lead to more fraternization.

Thus, if the Air Force does not want fraternization to occur among its members it needs to take action to reduce members' tolerance of those acts constituting fraternization. The results of this research effort suggest that members' tolerance is determined by three things fraternization, consequences, and the perception of need for the policy. The general implication of the study is that the Air Force should enforce the training requirement of AFI 36-2909 and develop ways to ensure proper implementation of the Air Force fraternization policy across the Air Force. It seems this is the best way to decrease members' tolerance of fraternization.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

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